

NC Division of Motor Vehicles

Office of the Commissioner

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DMV/TRUCK DRIVER TRAINING STUDY

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Executive Summary

Per Senate Bill 99, The Division of Motor Vehicles, in consultation with its partners, were legislatively mandated to conduct a study to review the training and industry workforce needs in North Carolina for drivers with a Commercial Driver's License.

Purpose:

The GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA, during SESSION 2017 ratified SESSION LAW 2018-5 and created SENATE BILL 99.

Background:

SB 99 DMV/Truck Driver Training Study (SL 2018-5)

SECTION 34.25.(a) Truck Driver Training Study. – The Division of Motor Vehicles, in consultation with the Highway Division of the Department of Transportation, the North Carolina Trucking Association, the North Carolina Community College System, interested private truck driving schools, and associations of industry partners, shall study the training and industry workforce need in North Carolina for drivers with a Commercial Driver's License (CDL). As part of the study, the Division of Motor Vehicles shall consider all of the following:

- (1) A statewide and regional needs assessment of industry demand for CDL drivers by driver license class and endorsement and an assessment and Senate Bill 99 Session Law 2018-5 Page 187 mapping of available public and private training programs and testing locations.
- (2) An assessment of existing CDL training programs across community colleges and private trucking schools, to include cost, average instructional hours, training curricula, and behind-the-wheel instruction time.
- (3) The costs, obstacles, and possible benefits to creating a statewide CDL training program with a focus on current geographical disparities in program availability.
- (4) The statewide and regional enrollment, completion rates, and waiting lists for the past three years of CDL training at community colleges and private truck driving schools.
- (5) A review of scholarships, grants, loans, or other financial assistance available to persons interested in obtaining a CDL.
- (6) A review of State law and regulations governing CDL licenses and CDL training and any recommendations or statutory adjustments to increase the number of CDL drivers in the State and to streamline and standardize existing training programs.
- (7) Fiscal estimate of the cost to meet any of the needs as identified in the report.
- (8) Any other topic or issue the Division of Motor Vehicles determines to be relevant to this study.

SECTION 34.25.(b) Report. – The Division of Motor Vehicles shall report its findings from the study required under subsection (a) of this section, including any legislative recommendations, to the chairs of the House of Representatives Appropriations Committee on Transportation and the chairs of

the Senate Appropriations Committee on Department of Transportation by the convening of the 2019 Regular Session of the General Assembly.

Key Finding:

The study revealed that there is a great disparity in the training hours provided by community colleges and private truck driving training schools. The study also revealed that several areas of North Carolina that are underrepresented and lack a presence of truck driving training facilities.

Key Recommendations:

Recommendation is to adopt the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) Minimum Training Requirements for Entry-Level Commercial Motor Vehicle Operators published December 8, 2016 that establishes new minimum training standards for all first-time CDL holders as the statewide standardized curricula. This new rule will be implemented February 7, 2020. The new rule also establishes the eligibility requirements to become a FMCSA Entry-Level Driver Training Provider (TPR). Once FMCSA determines the provider meets the requirements, FMCSA will issue a unique number to the provider. FMCSA may remove a provider from their registry when a provider fails to meet or maintain any of the qualifications established or fails to meet other State and Federal regulations applicable to the provider.

Background

Individuals that desire to enter the Commercial Motor Vehicle (CMV) profession have three avenues available to gain the knowledge, skills and abilities necessary to obtain a commercial driver license (CDL). The first avenue is to gain employment at a business that provides CMV on-the-job training. The second means is self-taught. The third method is to enroll in a truck driver training (TPT) program either offered by a community college or a private truck driver training school (TDTS) licensed by NC DMV.

Currently truck driver training curricula is not standardized across the three avenues available. The curricula in use today range from self-developed to commercially developed, off-the-shelf curricula with no standardized hours.

Whichever means of instruction the individual elects, they are required to pass approved knowledge test prior to being issued a Commercial Learner Permit (CLP). Once they have the CLP, they must hold the CLP for a minimum of 14 so they can gain the skills and ability to a level proficient to pass the CDL skills test.

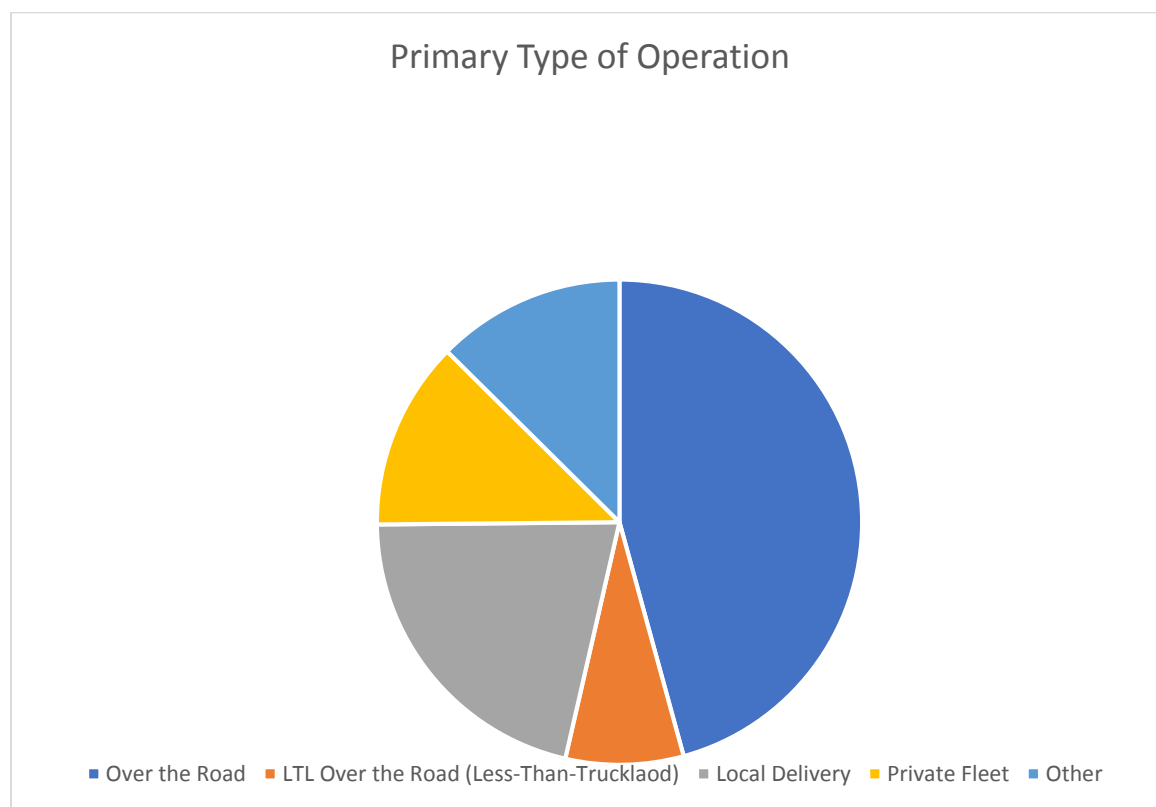
When the person successfully completes CDL skills testing, they are eligible to be issued their CDL. With a valid CDL in possession, the individual is now an entry-level driver into the Commercial Motor Vehicle profession.

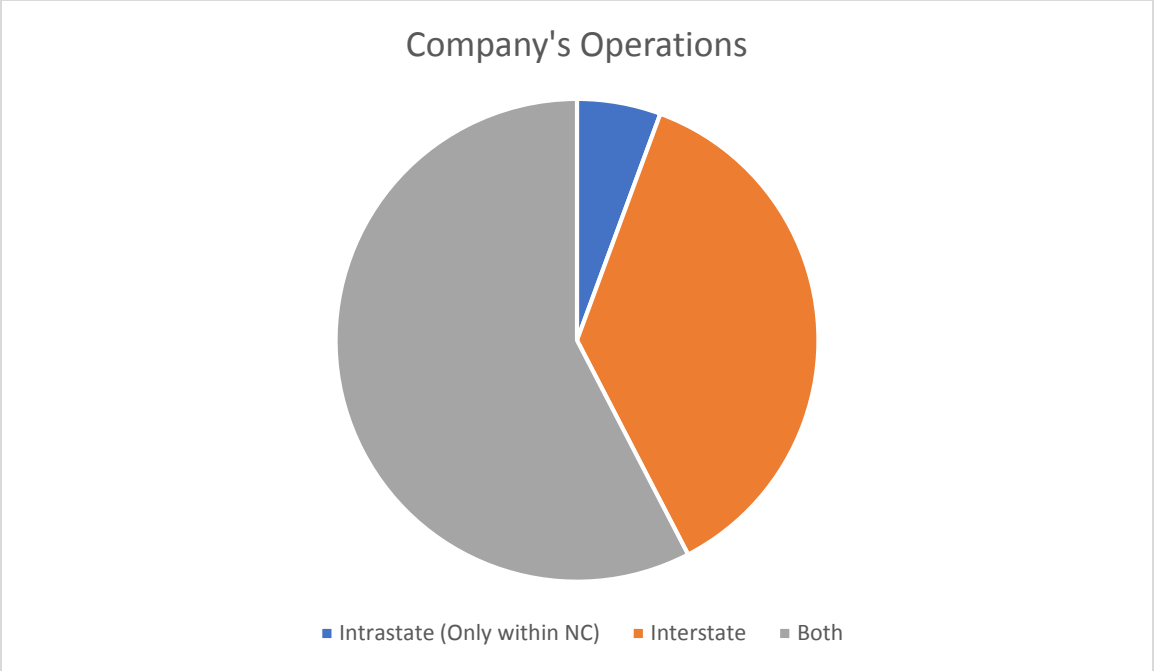
The Division of Motor Vehicles hosted a meeting with representatives from the Department of Transportation, North Carolina Trucking Association, North Carolina Community College System, community colleges with truck driver training programs and private truck driver training schools introducing the DMV/Truck Driver Training Study. Topics discussed were to generate a plan of action to determine what areas were needed from each respective group.

Members were requested to provide the data to address the study criteria. Once criteria was received it was compiled and evaluated to determine the recommendation to best serve the citizens of North Carolina seeking to obtain a profession in the commercial motor vehicle industry.

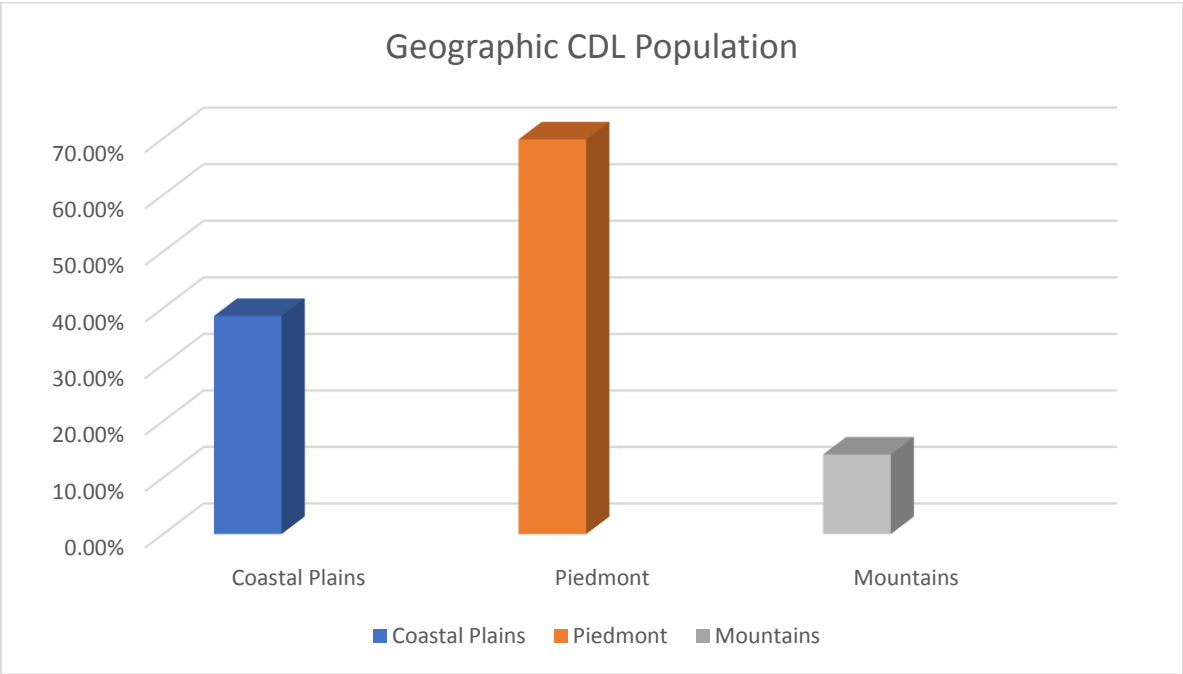
Findings

A statewide and regional needs assessment of industry demand for CDL drivers by driver license class and endorsement was assessed and provided by the NCTA. With responses from 107 companies that employ CDL drivers, the analysis reveals 57.5% of companies employ CDL Class A holders. Endorsements required for this class of drivers are as follows: 15.8% Hazardous Materials, 10.2% Tank Vehicles, 8.4% Double Trailers, and 66.3% do not require endorsements.



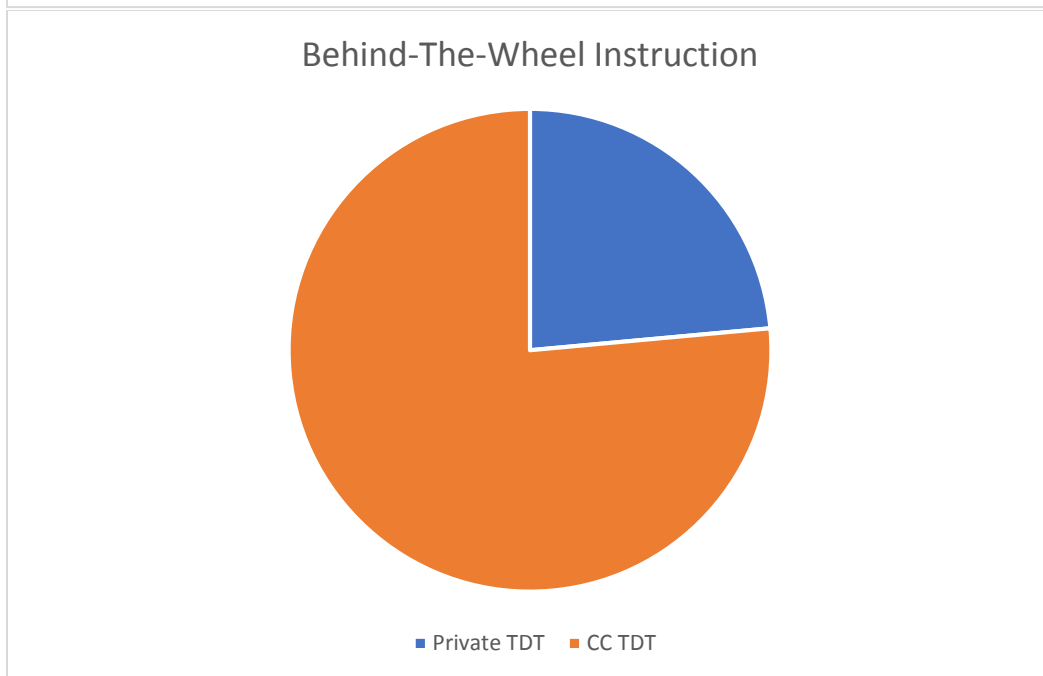
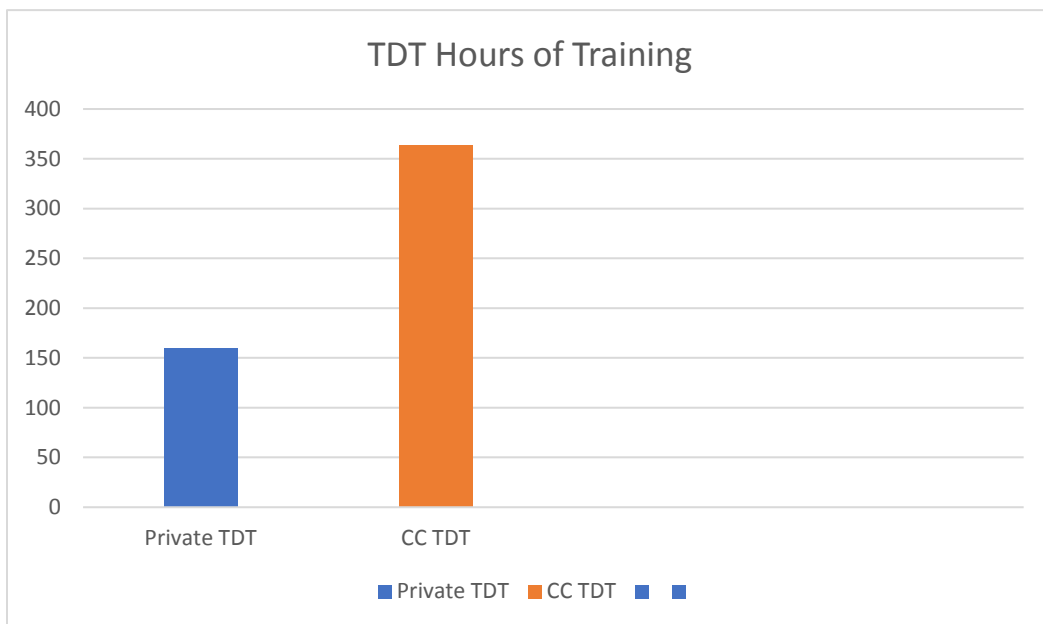


The geographic breakdown of the 107 companies that responded are 14.1% in the Mountain Region with 69.8% in the Piedmont area and the Coastal Plains represents 38.6% of the CDL population within North Carolina.



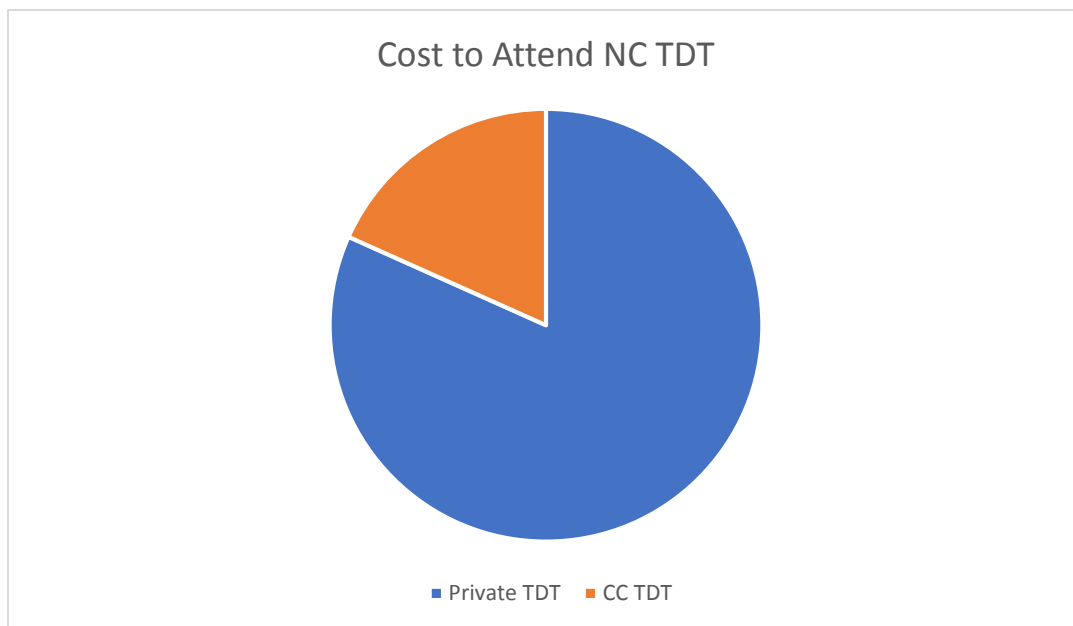
An assessment of existing CDL training programs across community colleges and private trucking schools revealed the following: an average cost per student is \$2,225.00, with average of 250 instructional hours per student and included an average of 56 hours behind-the-wheel instruction time.

- Community colleges average 364.5 hours of training
- Private training programs provide 160 hours in no less than four weeks

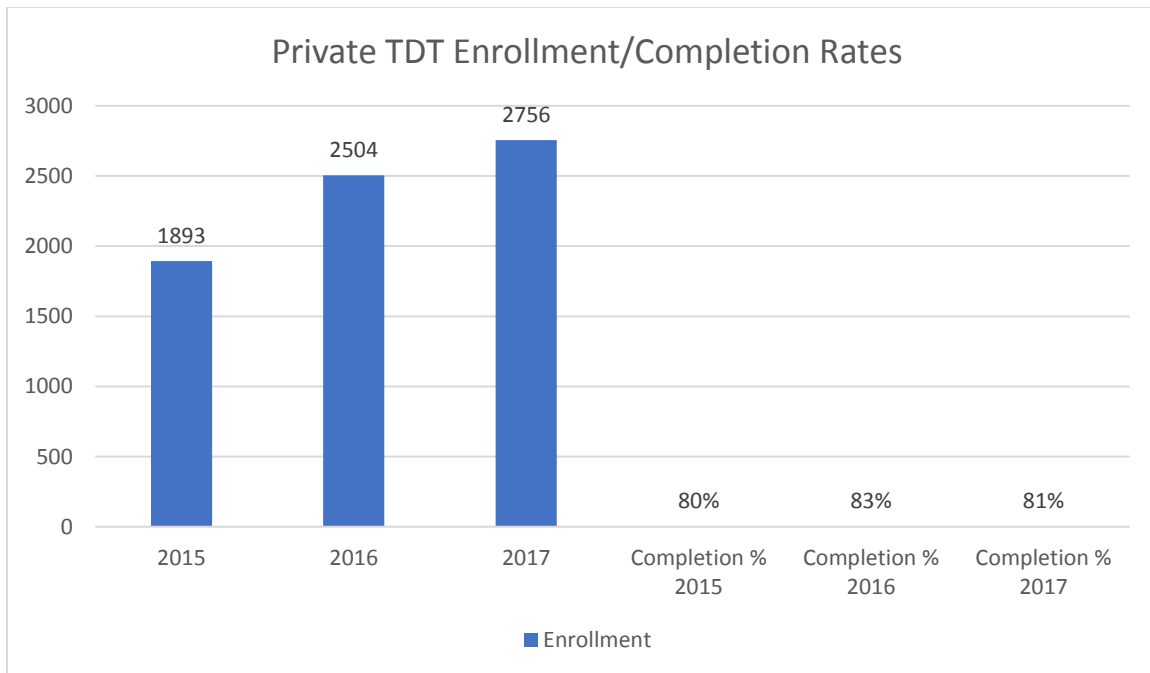
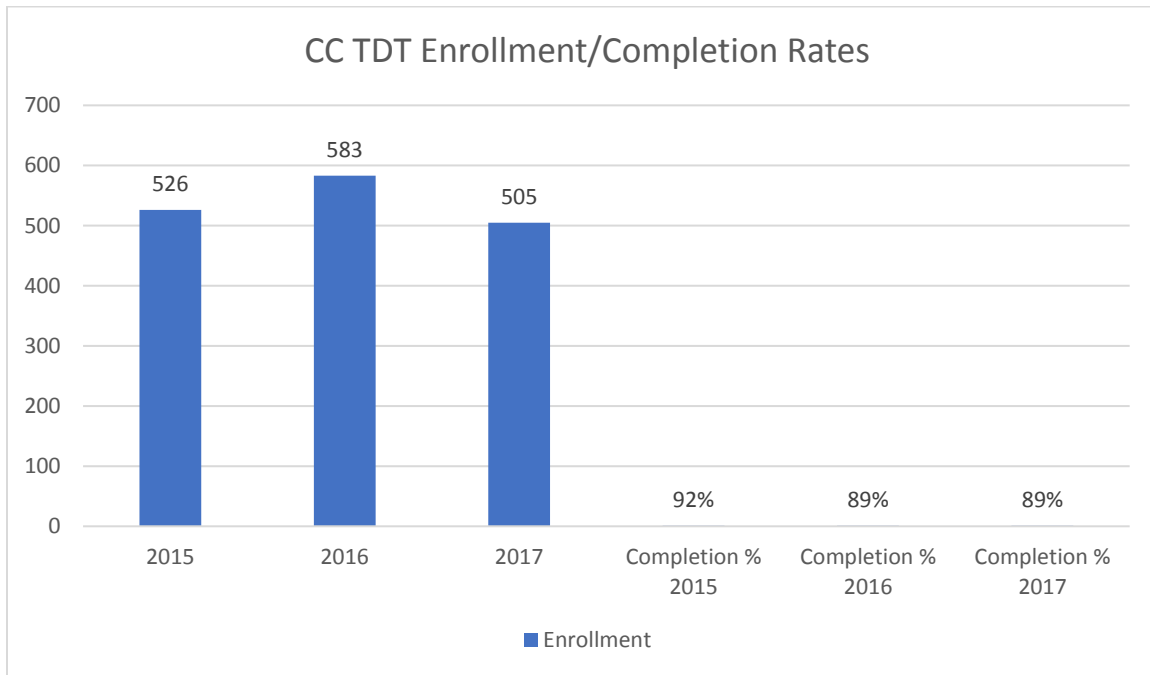


A review of scholarships, grants, loans or other financial assistance available to persons interested in obtaining a CDL are varied. Students receive funding from the following: VA GI Bill, Vocational Rehab, Contract with Carrier, NC Works, ResCare, Goodwill, Personal Loans, In-house financing, Golden Leaf Foundation, SECU Funds, Tobacco Trust Funds, Better Jobs Better Lives, Act Cohort, Mercancus Foundation and Project Skill Up.

- The average cost to attend a private training school is \$4,921.25
 - The lowest tuition for a private training school is \$2,900.00
 - The highest tuition for a private training school is \$5,270.00
- The average cost to attend a community college training program is \$1,102.40
 - The lowest tuition for a community training program is \$400.00
 - The highest tuition for a community training program is \$2,300.00



The study revealed statewide enrollment average of 275 students per year with an average of 1,013 school bus students. Completion rates are an average of 78% for TDTS and 81.5% for SBTS. Waiting lists for the past three years of CDL training at community colleges and private truck driving schools average of 102 students.



Recommendations

Recommendation is to adopt the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) Final Rule published December 8, 2016, Minimum Training Requirements for Entry-Level Commercial Motor Vehicle Operators as the statewide standardized curricula. This final rule establishes new minimum training standards for all first-time CDL holders and will be implemented February 7, 2020. Additionally, the final rule establishes the eligibility requirements to become a FMCSA Entry-Level Driver Training Provider (TPR). Once FMCSA determines a TPR applicant meets the requirements, FMCSA will issue a unique number to the provider. FMCSA may remove a provider from their registry when a provider fails to meet or maintain any of the qualifications established or fails to meet other State and Federal regulations applicable to the provider.

The TPR must provide facilities to include classroom and range that comply with all applicable Federal, State, and/or local statutes and regulations. TPR's must require all accepted applicants for training to certify that they will comply with U.S. Department of Transportation regulations, as well as State and/or local laws, related to controlled substance testing, age, medical certification, licensing and record. The TPR must provide entry-level driver trainees with sufficient knowledge of the commercial motor vehicle and its systems and subsystems to ensure that they understand their role in vehicle inspection, operation, maintenance and the impact of those factors upon highway safety and operational efficiency.

Topics that are mandatory to be covered in class room are: basic operation, orientation, control systems, pre- and post-trip inspections, basic control shifting and operating transmissions, backing and docking, coupling and docking, safe operating procedures, visual search, communication, distracted driving, speed management, night operation, extreme driving conditions, advance operating practices, hazard perception, skid control and recovery, jackknifing and other emergencies, railroad-highway grade crossings, vehicle systems and reporting malfunctions, identifications and reporting of malfunctions, roadside inspections, maintenance, non-driving accidents, handling and documenting cargo, environmental compliance, hours of service requirements, fatigue and wellness awareness, post-crash procedures external communications, whistle blower/coercion, trip planning, drugs and alcohol and medical requirements

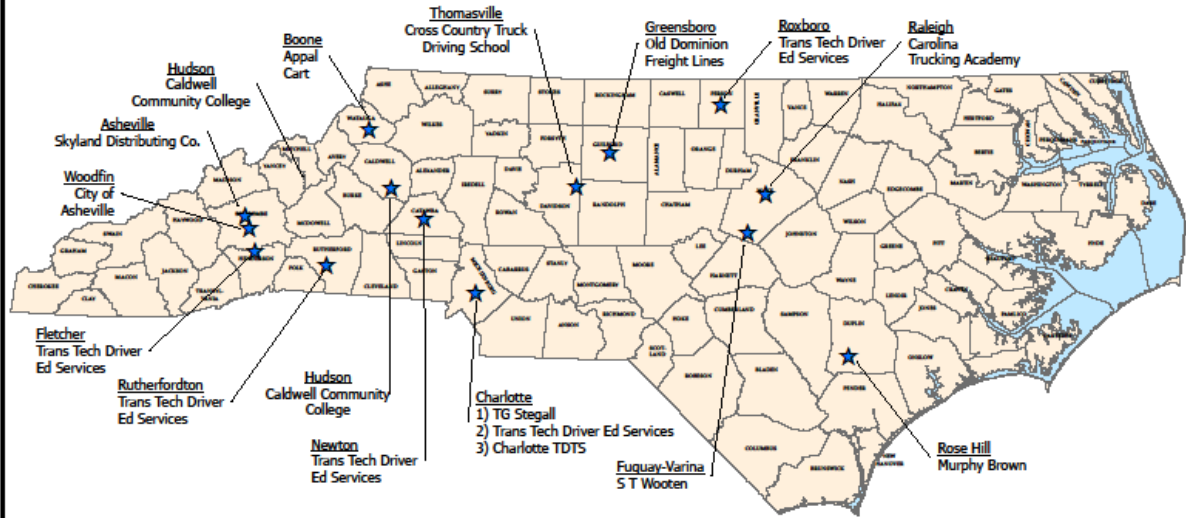
The TPR must teach mandatory behind-the-wheel – range driving exercises that relate to basic vehicle control skills and mastery of basic maneuvers, as necessary to operate a commercial motor vehicle safely on an approved driving range. The exercises that must be taught are: vehicle inspection pre-trip/en-route/post-trip, straight line backing, alley dock backing, off-set backing, parallel parking blind slide, parallel parking sight side, coupling and uncoupling.

The TPR must provide mandatory behind-the-wheel – public road instruction where the driver-trainee must demonstrate proficiency in proper techniques for initiating vehicle movement, executing left and right turns, changing lanes, navigating curves at speed, entry and exit on the interstate or controlled access highway, and stopping the vehicle in a controlled manner. Additionally, the driver-trainee must demonstrate proficiency in the following areas: shifting/transmission, communications/signaling, visual search, speed and space management, and safe driver behavior.

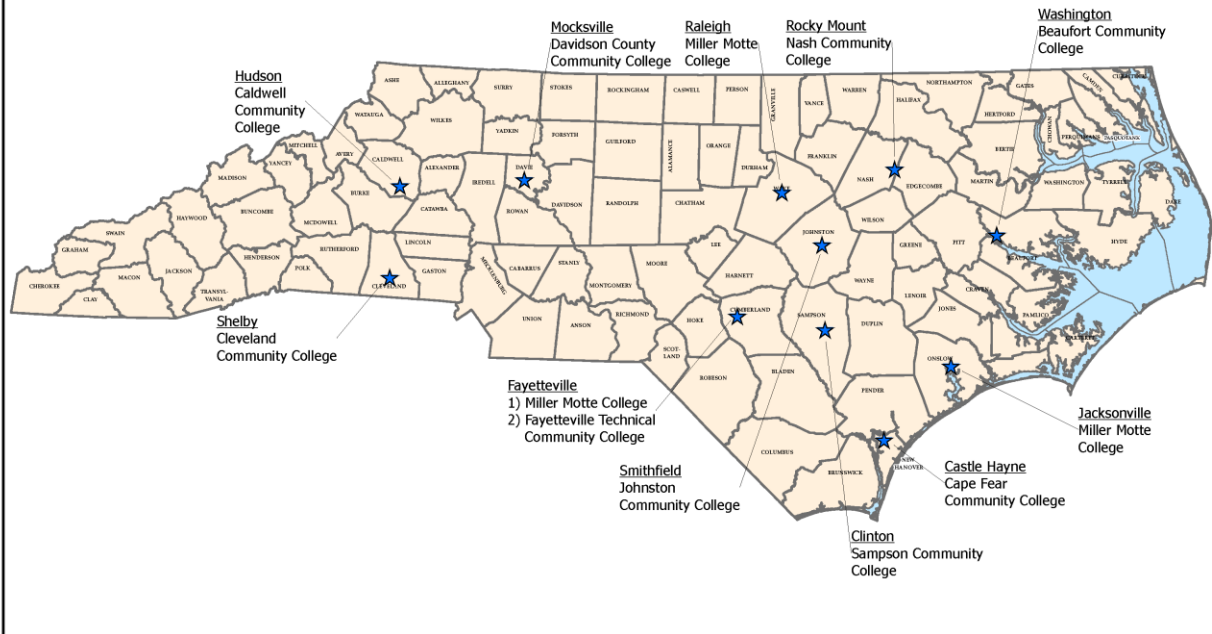
NCDMV CDL Skills Sites



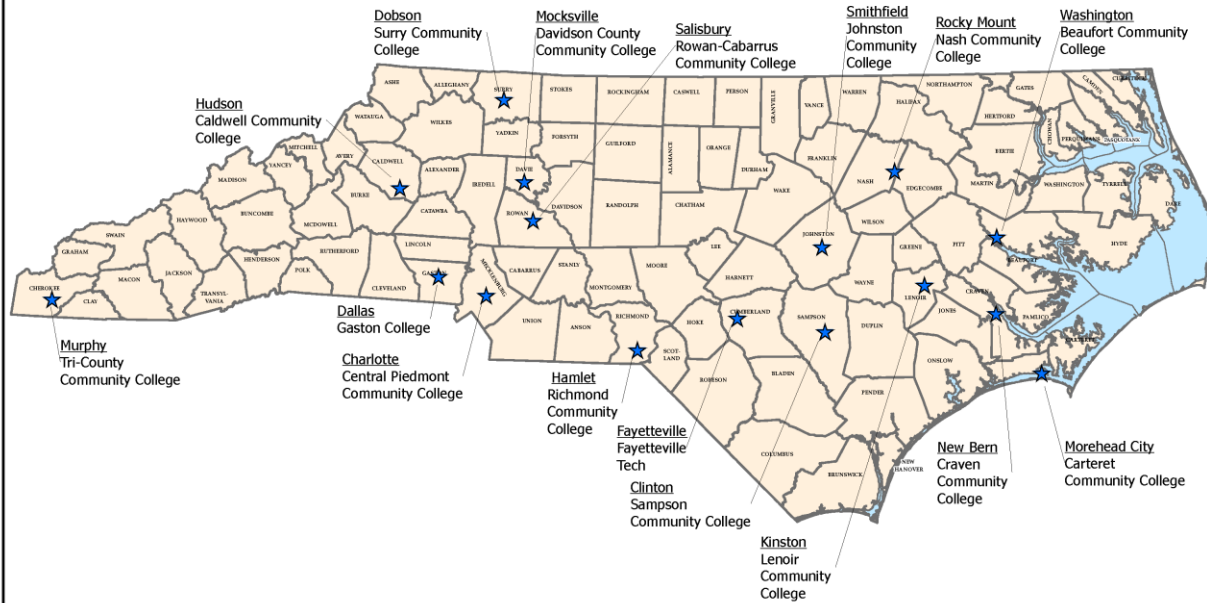
CDL Skills Testing by Addendum Holders



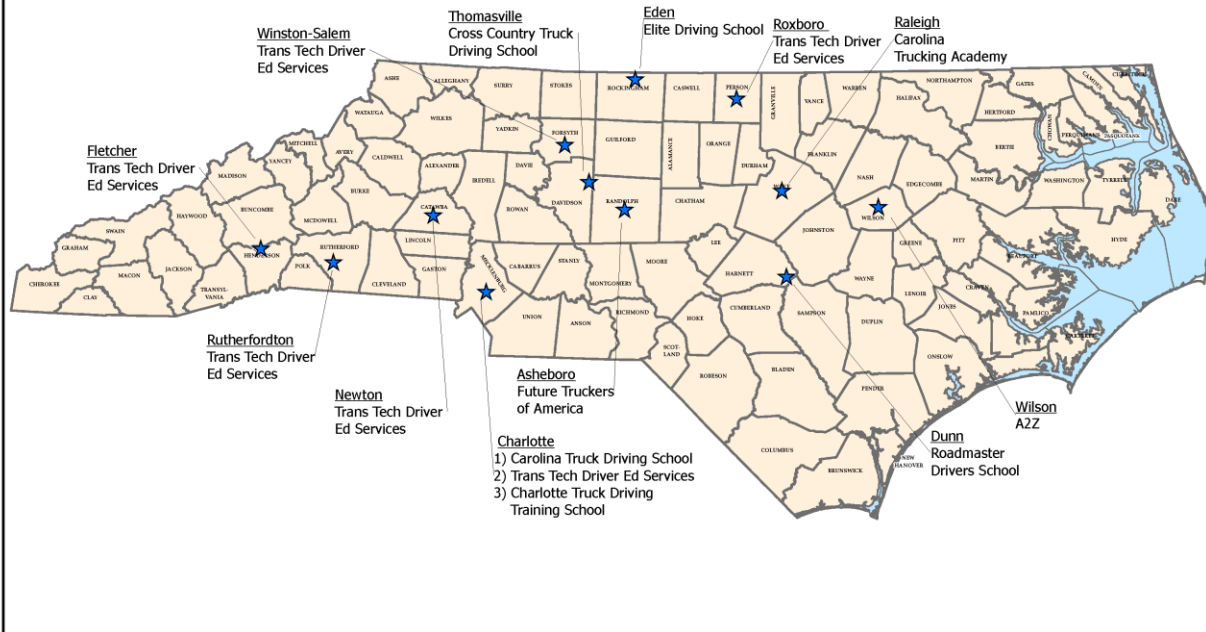
CDL Testing by Community Colleges



CDL Training by Community Colleges



Truck Driving Training Schools



Conclusion

The current methods of truck driver training produce quality operators regardless of curriculum, school or training method. The results statewide average an 86% pass rate for individuals enrolled in a formal truck driver training program or school. With the pending implementation of FMCSA Minimum Training Requirements for Entry-Level Commercial Motor Vehicle Operators, all persons seeking a career in the commercial motor vehicle operator profession will be required to attend formal training. With the high results our training providers are already achieving, there will not be a degradation of training, it will be just the opposite as all interties that provide training to persons desiring a CDL will be required to attend training with a FMCSA registered training provider.